

ELIZABETH PARK URBAN RENEWAL PLAN
February 2005

I. Location of the Elizabeth Park Urban Renewal Area

The Elizabeth Park Urban Renewal Area is located in the City of Akron, County of Summit, State of Ohio, and is bounded as shown on Map B and as described in Exhibit 1, attached. The Renewal Area consists of approximately 131 acres and is located immediately north of downtown Akron. The Renewal Area is approximately bounded by Glenwood Avenue on the north, North Howard Street on the west, Dean Street and the eastern edge of Elizabeth Park on the east and North Street and Spring Street on the south. The Little Cuyahoga River flows from east to west through the Renewal Area generally parallel to North Street.

II. Statement of Development Objectives to be Achieved by the Project

The goals of the City of Akron in undertaking the project are to work closely with neighborhood residents and property owners to: 1) eliminate blight and to prevent the recurrence of blight in the project area; 2) eliminate incompatible land uses in the project area; 3) facilitate the development of new housing and new retail opportunities in appropriate locations in the project area to offset economic stagnation; and 4) increase the attractiveness of the project area.

To carry out project goals, the following specific objectives are proposed:

A. Land Use Objective

1. Remove blighted properties within the project area which are deteriorated, or a threat to the public health, safety and general welfare.
2. Change zoning to match desired land uses.
3. Increase the attractiveness and stability of the residential area by facilitating new home construction and assuring that existing structures meet present day development standards.
4. Eliminate incompatible land uses that detract from the viable development of the area.

5. Transfer ownership of Elizabeth Park to AMHA to facilitate the construction of a new 269-unit housing development consisting of a mix of town houses, duplexes, one-bedroom flats, and single-family homes.
6. Develop new recreational opportunities in the area, including trails and open space, to take advantage of the proximity of the Little Cuyahoga River and replace amenities lost by the reutilization of Elizabeth Park for housing, including basketball courts, tennis courts, a ball field and a children's play area.
7. Explore pedestrian linkages to the west to tie into the Towpath Trail.
8. In all areas, respect a Riparian Corridor Overlay Zone extending 50 feet in width landward from the ordinary high watermark of each bank of the Little Cuyahoga River. No structures of any kind are permitted within this Overlay Zone. Also, the riparian corridor is to be protected during any new construction. Vegetation in poor condition (as determined by a landscape architect) shall be removed, but additional planting of trees, groundcover, shrubs, etc. is required to provide a natural continuation of the existing riparian buffer.

B. Housing Objective

1. Acquire and/or demolish severely deteriorated structures and structures necessary to carry out development objectives.
2. Facilitate the construction of the new 269-unit Hope VI project, consisting of a mix of town houses, duplexes, one-bedroom flats and single-family homes.
3. Create new housing of varying densities to take advantage of a unique setting in close proximity to downtown Akron, the Little Cuyahoga River, and the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Infill housing should complement existing housing in terms of size, setback and general building elevations (in terms of roof lines being parallel or perpendicular to the street).
4. Construct a variety of housing types to afford a choice for Akron residents in terms of size, style and price.

5. Assist occupants of homes purchased for demolition with relocation and afford them the opportunity to relocate into new homes in the Renewal Area if they so desire. If relocation is necessary, the City will follow the Relocation Plan and Activity Program adopted by Akron City Council.
6. Assist in providing housing of standard quality in the area by eliminating housing code violations through housing rehabilitation.
7. Discourage conversions of single-family homes into multi-unit structures.
8. Encourage ongoing pride, respect, and maintenance of residential property on the part of homeowners, landlords and tenants. Give particular attention to rental property.

C. Environmental Objectives

Develop an attractive and visually improved environment within the Renewal Area:

1. Remove properties which are poorly maintained or deteriorated, attract nuisance activities and are detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the general public and persons who pass through the area.
2. Remove blight in the area caused by overcrowding or inappropriate land use.
3. Implement redevelopment which will prevent blighted conditions from recurring which are harmful to persons within, adjacent to, and who pass through the renewal area.
4. Improve the functional and physical condition of the project area.
5. Keep the project area free of debris, trash and litter. Encourage property owners to clean up any lot littered with trash, debris or anything else that constitutes a blighting influence to neighboring properties.

6. Create new trails along the Little Cuyahoga River and a new neighborhood park.
7. Encourage development which will utilize the Little Cuyahoga River as an amenity while respecting a Riparian Corridor Overlay (see Section II A8).
8. Encourage pedestrian linkages to the Towpath Trail, North Howard Street and the Northside Entertainment District.

D. Public Improvements Objective

Provide the public improvements necessary for redevelopment, including streets, utilities, water and sewer, sidewalks, curbing, street trees, street lighting, etc. where necessary.

1. Construct a drainage system that is sensitive to preserving habitat in the Little Cuyahoga River and will not accelerate downstream erosion.

E. Circulation Objectives

Reduce conflicts among all forms of circulation routes, including pedestrian, vehicular, school and commercial traffic:

1. Provide a pedestrian oriented streetscape for the Hope VI project area.
2. Provide well-lit and landscaped parking areas for any surface lots.

F. Economic Objective

Promote new housing construction and retail development where appropriate to revitalize the redevelopment area and provide new housing opportunities for Akron residents.

III. Types of Proposed Renewal Actions

Proposed renewal actions to be carried out by the City following adoption of the Renewal Plan may include acquisition and clearance of property, the sale or lease of land for redevelopment, construction of supporting infrastructure, vacation of streets and other rights of way and additional

actions to support new housing construction, the development of a new park with recreational amenities, new retail activity and new office activity.

The Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority Hope VI development requires the transfer of Elizabeth Park from the City of Akron to AMHA for new residential construction. This includes the park property and community center located south of the Little Cuyahoga River.

Redevelopment sites controlled by the City are to be acquired by agreements with the City setting forth permitted uses, use restrictions and development requirements. The sale or lease of City-owned property, and the terms of the associated development agreements, requires review by the City Planning Commission and the approval of Akron City Council.

IV. Land Use Plan

A. Permitted Land Uses

Permitted land uses within the Elizabeth Park Urban Renewal Area include a mixture of attached and detached single-family residences, apartment, retail development, commercial development and recreational/open space uses dependent upon location and review. Site specific mixed use retail and residential development is permitted along North Street and North Howard Street, subject to review.

B. Zoning

1. Existing Zoning Map

Existing zoning consists of a mix of U1—A2 Two Family, U2 Apartment, U3 Retail Business, U4 Commercial, U5 Ordinary Industry and UHD Industrial. Some of the zoning in the area does not reflect existing conditions, especially in the residential areas, where most of the existing development is detached single-family residential. See Existing Zoning Map C.

2. Proposed Zoning

In order to facilitate the development of new housing in the area and more accurately reflect existing conditions, the following zoning changes are recommended:

Change zoning in the Renewal Area to U1 Single Family, excepting the following locations:

1. All properties south of North Street (zoning remains unchanged).
2. Properties north of North Street that will be used for the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority's Hope IV project and are bounded on the south by North Street, on the west by the Stuber Bridge and Elizabeth Parkway, on the north by Lods Street between Elizabeth Parkway and Turner Street and from Turner Street east following the rear property lines of all properties on the south side of Lods Street and on the east by the eastern boundary of the Renewal Area (most easily defined as the area encompassing the existing Elizabeth Park plus parcel 6201433—owned by AMHA along Elizabeth Parkway). The area described will be zoned U2 Apartment.
3. All properties west of Howard Street. A portion of this area from Cuyahoga Street north to the northern boundary of parcel 6835174 (304 North Howard Street) will be rezoned from U4 Commercial to U3 Retail Business.
4. Properties fronting the east side of Howard Street from East Lods Street north to the northern boundary of parcel 6709573 (301 North Howard Street). This area will be rezoned from U4 Commercial to U3 Retail Business.
5. Properties north of North Street and south of the Little Cuyahoga River currently zoned U4 Commercial and U5 Ordinary Industry. The portion of this area currently zoned U5 Ordinary Industry will be rezoned to U4 Commercial.

Properties conditionally zoned for Oriana House and the new Hope VI development will remain unchanged.

See Proposed Zoning Map F.

C. Additional Development Standards and Regulations

In addition to complying with the development standards and regulations set forth in the Akron Zoning Code, new development in the Elizabeth Park Urban Renewal Area shall comply with the following:

1. For the primary Hope VI project area:
 - a. Development shall conform to the conditions contained in Ordinance No. 540-2002, which authorized a Conditional Use to permit the establishment of a mixed residential development on property on the north and south side of East North Street, east of the All-American Bridge, in conjunction with AMHA's Hope VI application. All layout plans will be approved by the City of Akron Department of Planning and Urban Development.
 - b. A mix of apartment, two-family, and single-family uses is desired.
 - c. The design, layout and access to all off-street parking shall be reviewed and approved by the City. The use of alleys as access to parking is encouraged.
 - d. Layout plans should recognize the Little Cuyahoga River as an amenity.
 - e. Front porches are encouraged. Front porches must have a minimum depth of six feet.
 - f. The existing stone wall and steps in Elizabeth Park should be integrated into the HOPE VI layout plan.
2. For properties outside of the HOPE VI project area:
 - a. A mix of infill single-family homes, two-family, apartments, retail uses and recreational/open space is desired. Generally, apartments and retail uses are recommended along Howard Street or along North Street (west of the All-American Bridge). Mixed use retail/condominiums / apartments is also appropriate along Howard Street and/or North Street. The open space west

of the All-American Bridge should be expanded and assembled to create a park amenity comparable to Elizabeth Park.

- b. Any new construction along North Street should utilize the Little Cuyahoga River as an amenity.
 - c. For infill housing, setbacks and building configuration should be consistent with surrounding housing. All building plans shall be subject to approval by the City of Akron's Department of Planning and Urban Development.
 - d. Front porches are encouraged for all units. Porches must have a depth of at least six feet. A depth of eight feet is encouraged.
 - e. Covered, two-car parking is recommended for all housing. In some cases, depending on the style of unit, a single-car garage with an open parking space can be provided. Garages must be flush with, or recessed from, the primary building façade.
 - a. For buildings constructed on lots with Howard Street frontage, the maximum allowable setback from the right-of-way is ten feet.
 - b. The design, layout and access to all off-street parking shall be reviewed by the City. Along Howard Street, all off-street parking must be located behind or beside buildings. No parking will be allowed between the primary building façade and the street. For parking beside a building, a ten-foot landscape buffer (minimum) is required.
3. For all property in the Elizabeth Park Urban Renewal Area;
- a. No billboards or outdoor advertising displays of any nature shall be placed, erected or located in the Elizabeth Park Area except for the purpose of advertising redevelopment activity occurring as part of this plan.
 - b. All permanent signs shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and

receive the approval of the Akron City Planning Commission. The following guidelines apply to all exterior signage in the Elizabeth Park Urban Renewal Area:

- 1) Building mounted signage shall be for business identification only.
 - 2) Pole signs are prohibited.
 - 3) Ground mounted signs shall be for one business only.
 - 4) All signage materials shall be compatible with building materials and colors.
 - 5) Mechanically moving signage or flashing lights shall be prohibited.
 - 6) A sign may not project above the roof of a structure to which it is affixed.
- c. All private and public utilities will be placed underground.
- d. All outdoor storage areas shall be screened from view by solid walls or solid fences at least six feet in height. Such fencing and screening material shall be reviewed and approved by the Department of Planning and Urban Development. Stockade or chain-link fencing is not permitted in the development.
- e. Vehicular ingress and egress shall be approved by the Traffic Engineer.
- f. All public exterior areas shall be well lighted in a manner suitable for the intended use. Lighting should be adequate for the intended use, but should be sited and of such a nature as to not be intrusive into surrounding areas.
- g. The developer shall submit a storm water management plan to control the run-off, siltation and sedimentation during construction and to control the run-off after the development is completed. The plan is to be consistent with all the requirements of Section 193.101-.114 of the Code of Ordinances and is subject to the approval of the Bureau of Engineering. The storm water management plan must be submitted prior to the issuance of any building permits.

- h. All site plans shall be subject to approval by the City of Akron's Development of Planning and Urban Development.
- i. For development exceeding four units, all landscape plans shall be prepared by a registered landscape architect. The plan shall identify all plant material to be used by name, species, size, location, spacing and any other necessary information. Recommended landscaping material should be identified for use by individual property owners.
- j. Mailboxes will be attached to the house or clustered in appropriate locations. No freestanding mailboxes will be allowed.

V. Project Proposals

A. Land Acquisition and Disposition

1. Identification of Real Property Proposed to be Acquired

Property will be acquired as necessary in order to meet development objectives. Property acquisition and disposition is subject to approval by Akron City Council. See Exhibit 6 and Map G, Proposed Acquisitions.

2. Conditions under which Properties Not Identified to be Acquired may be Acquired

Properties which are severely deteriorated (substandard or major deterioration) may be acquired in order to remove conditions of blight which constitute a threat to health, safety and welfare in the area. Structures which are not substandard or are not in a state of major deterioration, may be acquired when they are necessary for public improvements, or when their acquisition is necessary in order to carry out the development goals of the plan, and to permit proper and orderly development in the project area.

3. Conditions under which Properties Identified to be Acquired may not be Acquired.

As properties are identified for acquisition, such properties may not be acquired if it is determined that an acceptable alternative will achieve the objectives of the Plan, if project priorities change or if Federal Program funding is substantially reduced.

B. Rehabilitation and Conservation

The project involves new construction and rehabilitation. For properties not designated for acquisition, inspection services, technical assistance, grants, matching grants, deferred loans and low interest loans may be available to assist property owners with building improvements.

C. Redeveloper's Obligations for Land Purchased or Leased from the City of Akron

1. Developers will be obligated to construct and maintain the structures and facilities in accordance with all codes and ordinances of the City of Akron and must abide by the development standards prepared for the area.
2. Construction of four or more units upon land sold or leased by the City shall be in accordance with all terms and conditions of a Lease Agreement or Redevelopment Agreement executed by the City and the project developer.
3. The Developer of four or more units shall submit site plans and building plans to the City of Akron, Department of Planning and Urban Development. The Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission shall review these plans, and the City Planning Commission shall approve these plans prior to commencement of construction to assure compliance with the Renewal Plan. It is expressly understood that approval of any plans by the City of Akron applies to any and all features shown thereon; and that any subsequent additions, deletions, or other modifications thereof are required to be submitted by the developer before construction of such modifications can begin.

4. The Developer shall commence new construction on land acquired by the City and conveyed to the Developer within 12 months after conveyance.
5. The Developer shall agree that no covenant, agreement, lease conveyance or other instrument relating to the property shall be effected or executed on the basis or race, creed, color, sex or national origin in the sale, lease, use or occupancy thereof.

VI. Other Provisions

A. Relationship to Local Objectives

The objectives and proposals of this Redevelopment Plan conform with the general plan for the City of Akron to develop a variety of housing types in appropriate and desirable housing locations. The Urban Renewal Plan provides for the redevelopment of the project area in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals and welfare.

B. Relocation Plan

Should action by the City result in displacement of any residents or businesses, the relocation of displaced individuals or families will be carried out in conformance with the City of Akron Relocation Plan and Activity Program.

C. Duration of the Renewal Plan Restrictions

The Renewal Plan and/or modification thereof shall be in force and effect for a period of 40 years from the date of approval of this Renewal Plan by the City of Akron. The termination of this Renewal Plan shall in no way permit the project land or any part thereof to be restricted on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin in the sale, use, or occupancy thereof; nor shall it permit the practice of discrimination based on race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.

D. Provisions for Amending Approved Plan

This Renewal Plan may be amended from time to time upon approval by the City Planning Commission and City Council.

VII. Legislation to be Utilized to Fulfill Plan Objectives

A. Ohio Revised Code: Urban Renewal or Redevelopment Tax Increment Equivalent (Sections 5709 et. seq. or Section 725 et seq.)

Tax increment financing, as permitted by provisions of the above statutes, will assist the City in paying for the improvements which will be undertaken within the Elizabeth Park Renewal Area and other public improvements necessary to accomplish the goals of the City's General Plan. Section 5709.41 to 5709.43 permit the City to declare that improvements made on real property owned by the City and sold or leased to a developer to be a "public purpose" and exempt from real property taxation for up to 30 years. The City can thereafter require the owner of any structure constructed on the parcel to make annual service payments in-lieu-of taxes to the City. Chapter 725 permits the City to exempt from real property taxes the portion of the assessed valuation of improvements constructed pursuant to a development agreement. The City can thereafter require the owner of the improvements constructed on the parcel to make annual service payments in-lieu-of taxes to the City.

Exhibit 1
Elizabeth Park Renewal Area
Boundary Description

Beginning at a point being the intersection of the north right-of-way line of North Street and the east right-of-way line of North Howard Street.

Thence north along the east right-of-way line of North Howard Street approximately 519 feet to a point being the intersection of the north right-of-way line of Lods Street.

Thence west along the north right-of-way line of Lods Street approximately 180 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence north along said property line approximately 260 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence west along said property line approximately 188 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence north along said property line approximately 292 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence west along said property line approximately 18 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence north along said property line approximately 369 feet to a point being the intersection of the south right-of-way line of Glenwood Avenue.

Thence easterly along the south right-of-way line of Glenwood Avenue approximately 310 feet to a point being the intersection of the east right-of-way line of North Howard Street.

Thence north along the east right-of-way line of North Howard Street approximately 324 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line approximately 360 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence northeast along said property line approximately 34 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line approximately 90 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence southwest along said property line approximately 12 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line approximately 135 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence southeast along said property line approximately 174 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line and an extension thereof approximately 495 feet to a point being the intersection of the south right-of-way line of Glenwood Avenue.

Thence east and northeast along the south right-of-way line of Glenwood Avenue approximately 961 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 203 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line approximately 15 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 37 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence west along said property line approximately 600 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 690 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line approximately 50 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 184 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line 300 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence north along said property line approximately 183 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line 50 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 183 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line approximately 406 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 375 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence west along said property line approximately 79 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 305 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence west along said property line approximately 168 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 346 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence east along said property line approximately 32 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence south along said property line approximately 182 feet to a point being the intersection of the north right-of-way line of North Street.

Thence northwest along the north right-of-way line of North Street approximately 670 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence southwest (crossing North Street) approximately 71 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line (the northwest corner of Parcel 6755450) and the south right-of-way line of North Street.

Thence southwest along said property line approximately 139 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence southwest along said property line approximately 360 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence west along said property line approximately 964 feet and north approximately 38 feet to a point being the intersection of the south right-of-way line of Spring Street.

Thence west and north along the south/west right-of-way line of Spring Street approximately 81 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence northwest along said property line approximately 123 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence west along said property line approximately 23 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence northeast along said property line approximately 70 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence north along said property line approximately 114 feet to a point being the intersection of a property line.

Thence northeast along said property line and an extension thereof approximately 192 feet to a point being the intersection of the north right-of-way line of North Street.

Thence east along the north right-of-way of North Street approximately 828 feet to the place of beginning.

